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Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 AID-05
IO-13 HEW-04 L-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DIWY-01
AGRE-00 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 OPIC-03
XMB-02 FRB-03 /090 W
----------123696 121602Z /45
R 121430Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5124

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FROM AMBASSADOR TO NSC AD HOC GROUP ON POPULATION POLICY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR
SUBJ: REQUEST FOR POPULATION INFORMATION

REF: A. STATE 167895, B. MEMO, PRGRESS REPORT, DESIRED BIRTHS,
TO PHA/POP/AFR, C. 76 TOAID A-59

1. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
THE GOVERNMENT OF ZAIRE (GOZ) ESTIMATE FOR MID-1976 TOTAL POPULATION

IS 25,567,000. THIS ESTIMATE IS BASED ON PROJECTIONS FROM THE 1970 ADMINISTRATIVE CENSUS AND PROBABLY ERRS ON THE HIGH SIDE. THE BIRTH RATE IS ESTIMATED AT 47/1000 FOR BOTH 1975 AND 1976 AND THE DEATH RATE AT 20 AND 19 FOR THESE SAME YEARS RESPECTIVELY. THE TREND IS PROBABLY GRADUALLY DOWN FOR BOTH, THOUGH THIS TREND WILL NOT BECOME MATERIALLY EVIDENT FOR BIRTH RATES UNTIL THE 1980S.

2. POPULATION POLICY AND PROGRAMS
A POPULATION POLICY FOR ZAIRE WAS FIRST SIGNALED BY PRES MOBUTU IN A 1972 SPEECH IN WHICH HE STATED THAT A KEY GOAL FOR ZAIRE IS TO REDUCE INFANT MORTALITY SO THAT THE NUMBER OF ACTUAL
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BIRTHS WILL CORRESPOND TO THE NUMBER OF DESIRED BIRTHS. HE SAID ABORTIONS AVOID UNDESIRED CHILDREN SHOULD BE UNNECESSARY, AND ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS SHOULD BE ELIMINATED. IN ORDER THAT PARENTS MAY BE ABLE TO SPACE THEIR CHILDREN AND HAVE ONLY THE OFFSPRING DESIRED, FAMILY PLANNING INFORMATION AND SERVICES MUST BE AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. THESE VIEWS OF PRES MOBUTU WERE LEGITIMIZED AS THE COUNTRY'S OFFICIAL POLICY IN FEB 1973 BY AN ORDINANCE CREATING

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A NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR DEISRED BIRTHS. THE ACTUAL CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE WAS DELAYED FOR VARIOUS REASONS UNTIL NOV 1975 AND THE COMMITTEE ONLY BEGAN TO FUNCTION SERIOUSLY IN 1976.

SINCE PRES MOBUTU'S 1972 SPEECH, HIS WORDS HAVE BEEN FREQUENTLY QUOTED BY ZAIRIANS INTERESTED IN THE DESIRED BIRTHS (FAMILY PLANNING) PROGRAM, BUT NEITHER THE PRES HIMSELF, NOR ANY OTHER HIGH OFFICIALS, HAS MADE ANY RECENT ADDITIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENTS, EITHER FOR OR AGAINST THE PROGRAM. THE PREVIOUS HEALTH MINISTER HAD INITIATED

SEVERAL MOVES IN LATE 1976 WHICH WOULD HAVE SERVED TO ADVANCE THE PROGRAM BUT IMPLEMENTATION WAS NOT EFFECTED BY HIS REPLACEMENT. THE CURRENT HEALTH MINISTER, WHILE NOT OPPOSED TO THE DESIRED BIRTHS PROGRAM, DOES NOT SEE IT AS A PRIORITY MATTER FOR THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

AT THE IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL, HOWEVER, THE MEDICAL DOCTOR DIRECTING THE DESIRED BIRTHS PROGRAM IS QUITE CAPABLE AND IS MAKING EVIDENT PROGRESS IN LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR A NATIONWIDE PROGRAM. BECAUSE GOZ SUPPORT IS FRAGMENTED AND LACKS CLEAR LINES OF AUTHORITY, THE DIRECTOR HAS HAD TO DEVELOP AN ADMINISTRATIVE NUCLEUS ABLE TO FUNCTION INDEPENDENTLY, BUT AT THE SAME TIME ABLE TO DRAW ON THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENCY, LOCAL PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS, AND PARASTATAL BUSINESS HLEALTH FACILITIES. THE REQUIRED DEGREE OF INDEPENDENCE IS DERIVED THROUGH OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE FROM VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS, THE MOST IMPORTANT BEING INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS, PATHFINDER FUND FOR TRAINING PRO-

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GRAMS, AND USAID FOR CONTRACEPTIVE SUPPLIES EXCEPT INJECTABLES.

GOZ PLANNERS ARE AGREED THAT FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES SHOULD BE INTEGRATED WITH MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES, NOT ONLY BECAUSE THE CONCEPTS OF THE DESIRED BIRTH PROGRAM, AS ENUNCIATED BY PRES MOBUTU, APPEAR TO DICTATE THIS LINK, BUT ALSO FOR PRACTICAL REASONS OF STAFFING AND LOGISTICS. AT THIS STAGE, THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

IS ATTEMPTING TO IMPLEMENT THIS CONCEPT THROUGH A SERIES OF FAMILY PLANNING TRAINING SESSIONS FOR NURSES AND DOCTORS FROM EXISTING MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS, BOTH GOZ AND PRIVATE. THE TRAINEES RETURN TO THEIR INSTITUTIONS PREPARED TO ADMINISTER A FAMILY LANNING INFORMATION

AND SERVICES OUTLET AS A FUNCTION OF THEIR INSTITUTION. THE PROGRAM IS JUST BEGINNING, HOWEVER, WITH ONLY SIXTY NURSES AND DOCTORS HAVING RECEIVED THIS TRAINING THROUGH JULY OF 1977.

DETAILS CONCERNING RECENT PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS, AND CONCERNING PROGRAM SUPPORT, BOTH FROM WITHIN ZAIRE AND FROM OUTSIDE SOURCES, ARE TO BE FOUND IN REF B.

CURRENT ASSISTANCE IS BEING VERY EFFECTIVELY USED, ALTHOUGH THE PROGRAM IS SMALL. HOW SOON ANY LARGE INCREASES IN THE OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE CAN BE USED EFFECTIVELY WILL DEPEND ON THE RESOLUTION OF THE EXACT LOCATION OF THE DESIRED BIRTHS PROGRAM WITHIN THE GOVT AND

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ESTABLISHMENT OF CLEAR LINES OF AUTHORITY. NEVERTHELESS, THERE IS AN IMMEDATE NEED FOR LOCAL CURRENCY IN ORDER TO CONSOLIDATE THE ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS, CLINIC FACILITIES, AND TRAIING IN ONE LOCATION, ELIMINATING CURRENT DOLLAR RENTAL COSTS AND THE INEFF-ICIENCY OF SEPARATE LOCATIONS. THIS LOCAL CURRENCY SHOULD BECOME AVAIALBE FROM CONTERPART FUNDS IN THE NEAR FUTURE PROVIDED THE GOZ OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE FUNDS AGREE THAT THE DESIRED BIRTHS PROGRAM HAS SUFFICIENT PRIORITY TO MERIT THIS ASSISTANCE.

3. NO-POPULATION PROGRAMS AFFECTING POPULATION GROWTH
THE GOZ IS AT LEAST VERBALLY COMMITTED TO IMPROVING MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH CLINICS DIRECTED SPECIFICALLY TO THIS PURPOSE, THROUGH IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMS, E.G., THE CURRENT MEASLES CAMPAIGN, AND THROUGH IMPROVED NUTRITION. EVIDENCE OF REDUCED INFANT AND CHILD
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MORTALITY SHOULD CONVINCE SOME PARENTS THAT THEY CAN HAVE FEWER CHILDREN AND STILL HAVE CONFIDENCE THAT THE DESIRED NUMBER WILL SURVIVE TO ADULTHOOD. OTHER GOVT PORGRAMS, SUCH AS OEUVRES MAMA MOBUTU, SUPPORT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLD OF WOMEN IN SOCIAL ACTION GROUPS AND PROMOTE ACTIVITIES FOR WOMEN OUTSIDE THE NORMAL FAMILY LIFE ROLE WHICH MAY, IN TURN, CREAT CONTACTS, INTERESTS, AND EXCHANGES OF INFORMATION LEADING TO

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 AID-05
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XMB-02 FRB-03 /090 W
----------124200 121604Z /45
R 121430Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5125

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FROM AMBASSADOR TO NSC AD HOC GROUP ON POPULATION POLICY

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CHANGING ATTITUDES TOWARD REPETITIVE PREGNANCIES ON THE PART OF THESE WOMEN AND THEIR FRIENDS.

THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOZ MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN JULY 1977 INDICATES GOVERNMENT CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF THE RURAL POPULATION AND MAY PRESAGE ACTIONS WHICH WILL RAISE THE STANDARD OF LIVING OF FAMILIES IN RURAL AREAS. THERE IS A CONTINUING GOZ EMPHASIS TOWARD INCREASING THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF FFEMALES WITH SUCCESS PRESUMED TO HAVE A MODERATING EFFECT ON FERTILITY. A RECENT (1977) DECISION BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO INTRO-DUCE SEX EDUCATION, INCLUDING GAMILY PLANNING, INTO THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM IS IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF FUTURE DOWNWARD FERTILITY.

4. FOOD AND POPULATION

ZAIRE HAS AN ENORMOUS AGRICULTURAL POTENTIAL, GIVEN ITS AREA OF 2.34 MILLION SQUARE KILOMETERS AND POPULATION OF 25 MILLION, 70 PERCENT OF WHOM LIVE IN RURAL AREAS. THE EXTENT OF THE COUNTRY AND THE VARIETY OF ITS AGRICULTURAL AND CLIMATIC CHARACTERISTICS PERMIT YEAR-ROUND PRODUCTION OF A LARGE RANGE OF CROPS, BOTH FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION AND FOR EXPORT. THE LAND IS FURROWED WITH RIVERS AND STREAMS, WHICH PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND FACILITATE IRRIGATION WHERE IT IS NEEDED. SOILS, HOWEVER, ARE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXTREMELY VARIED,AND TEND TO BE GENERALLY LOW IN FERTILITY AND PRONE TO EROSION.

DESPITE POTENTIAL, THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE HAS BEEN STEADILY DETERIORATING SINCE 1970. THE COUNTRY HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY DEPENDENT ON IMPORTS FOR ITS SUPPLIES OF SEVERAL BASIC FOODSTUFFS. EVEN THOUGH SOME CROP PRODUCTION FIGURES ARE BEGINNING TO RISE, IMPORTS OF CORN, RICE, WHEAT, FISH, MEAT, AND SUGAR ALL INCREASED BETWEEN 1970 AND 1975.

THERE IS A RAPIDLY INCREASING DEMAND FOR CORN IN THE URBAN AND MINING CENTERS. CORN PRODUCTION IS GRADUALLY RECOVERING FROM POST-INDEPENDENCE DECLINES, BUT DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS RAISE ENORMOUS PROBLEMS. HOPEFULLY, SEVERAL NEW PROJECTS, SUCH AS THE USAID NORTH SHABA AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, WILL BRING IMPROVEMENTS TO THIS SECTOR. DEMAND FOR IMPORTED WHEAT FLOUR IS INCREASING, PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF USE FOR WHEAT BREAD, WHICH HAS BECOME AN URBAN FOOD STAPLE. LOCALLY GROWN MANIOC IS THE MOST COMMONLY USED BASIC FOOD BUT PRODUCTION IS DECLINING BECAUSE OF THE EXTENSIVE INCIDENCE OF BLIGHT AND INSECT INFESTATION.

NO VIABLE SOLUTION IS FORESEEN BEFORE 1980 AND AT LEAST UNTIL THEN LOCAL MANIOC PRODUCTION WILL CONTINUE TO DECLINE. THIS DECLINE MUST BE TAKEN UP BY INCREASED IMPORTS OF OTHER BASIC FOODS.

AVAILABLE DATA ARE NOT CONSIDERED DEPENDABLE AND ARE NOT SUFFICIENT FOR VALID LONG RANGE PROJECTIONS CONCERNING IMPORT REQUIREMENTS. HOWEVER, GOZ DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE STATISTICS INDICATE THE FOLLOWING:

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	IMPORTS(METRIC TONS)			CONSUMPTION(METRIC TONS)		
COMMODITY	1970	1975	1980	1970	1975	1980
CORN	88	185	40	418	618	850
RICE	25	25	-50	128	158	250
WHEAT FLOUR	85	90	104	87	92	106
MEAT	13	16	18	42	49	60
FISH	33	42	46	169	196	226
SUGAR	17	18	20	61	81	100

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THE DECREASING IMPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR CORN AND THE EXPORT PROJECTION FOR RICE FOR 1980 ARE OVERLY OPTIMISTIC. ZAIRE WILL CONTINUE TO BE A NET IMPORTER OF BASIC FOODSTUFFS THROUGH 1985. FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES OF THE GOZ WERE AFFECTIVELY EXHAUSTED IN EARLY 1975 AS A RESULT OF THE FALL IN COPPER PRICES IN MID-1974, AND BECAUSE OF POOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT. THE GOZ HAS DIFFICULTY PAYING FOR FOOD IMPORTS AT CURRENT PRICES. THIS SITUATION WILL CONTINUE AT LEAST THROUGH THE EARLY 1980S. PROJECTIONS OF WHEN THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS POSITION WILL IMPROVE ARE EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT AT THE PRESENT TIME BECASUE OF EXTERNAL FACTORS, E.G., DEBT RESCHEDULING, METAL AND FOOD PRICES, AND THE RATE OF REPATRIATION OF EXPORT EARNINGS.

ZAIRE'S INTERNAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM WAS DEVELOPED TO EVACUATE MINERAL AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE FROM THE INTERIOR TO PORTS FOR EXPORT. A NUMBER OF TRANSSHIPMENTS ARE INVOLVED BECAUSE OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE TRANSPORT NETWORK AND DISTANCES, WHICH RANGE UP TO 2,500 KMS FROM PORT TO SOURCE OF PRODUCTION. THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE TRANSPORT SYSTEM IS THE ZAIRE RIVER AND ITS TRIBUTARIES. THESE WATERWAYS ARE COMPLEMENTED BY RAILROADS, ROADS, FERRIES, AND AIRLINES, THIS TYPE OF TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM REQUIRES A HIGH DEGREE OF COORDINATION. UNFORTUNATELY, THE WHOLE SYSTEM SUFFERS FROM PHYSICAL DETERIORATION, LACK OF QUALIFIED STAFF, POOR ORGANIZATION, AND LACK OF SPARE PARTS. THE CONDITION OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IS A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO THE DEVELOP-MENT OF THE ECONOMY.

FACILITIES TO HANDLE UNLOADING AND STORAGE OF COMMODITIES IN ZAIRE ARE LIMITED. THE ONLY FACILITY CAPABLE OF HANDLING THE BULK OFF-LOADING OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES IS OWNED BY A PRIVATE FIRM IN MATADI. PROPER STORAGE FACILITIES, EXCEPT FOR WAREHOUSES IN PORT AREAS, ARE ALMOST NON-EXISTENT.

SEE REF C FOR ADDITIONAL GENERAL BACKGROUND.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1620194
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR POPULATION INFORMATION
TAGS: PFOR, SPOP, CG
To: STATE
Type: TE
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Review Markings:
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